

Message Text

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ACTION AF-05

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E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT PFOR ET US

SUBJ: THE SITUATION IN MOFA: WHITHER ETHIOPIA ?

1. POL COUNSELOR CALLED ON VICEMIN (INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS) TESFAYE MAKASHA AT LATTER'S REQUEST ON OCTOBER 2.

2. TESFAYE WANTED TO CONVEY TO USG HIS SENSE OF DISQUIET OVER DIRECTION OF POLITICAL TRENDS APPEARING IN ETHIOPIA AND NOTABLY IN MOFA AND AFCC.

3. IN HOUR-LONG CONVERSATION HE SAID IN ESSENCE THAT AFCC ELEMENTS INCREASINGLY TRENDING TOWARDS SEARCH FOR "SOCIALIST PANACEAS" TO ETHIOPIAN PROBLEMS. FOREIGN POLICY REAPPROACHMENT WITH SOCIALIST STATES (UNSPECIFIED) BEING ADVOCATED WITH LITTLE OR NO THOUGHT FOR ETHIOPIAN INTERESTS, OBJECTIVES AND INTERNATIONAL REALITIES. DYNAMIC SEEMED TO BE UNQUESTIONED ASSUMPTION BY YOUNG AND OFTEN INEXPERIENCED REFORMERS OF GREATER BENEFITS TO BE DERIVED FOR ETHIOPIA FROM REALIGNMENT TO SOCIALIST PATRONS. BENEFITS TO ETHIOPIA FLOWING FROM US TIE EITHER UNKNOWN OR SIMPLY BRUSHED ASIDE IN THESE QUARTERS. INDEED, UNTHINKING ANTI-AMERICANISM BECOMING FASHIONABLE, PARTICULARLY IN MOFA, BUT ALSO IN YOUNGER AFCC STRATA.

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4. LEADER OF PRO-SOCIALIST OPTION GROUP IN MOFA, ACCORDING TESFAYE, IS LEGAL ADVISER GETACHEW KIBRET. HE HAS ALEMAYEHU SEIFU (SECOND ASSISTANT, AMERICAN DEPARTMENT) AND ASSISTANT MIN HAILU WOLDE GHIORGHIS WITH HIM. ALL OF THESE ARE ON MOFA "PLANS AND POLICY" COMMITTEE, AS IS TESFAYE HIMSELF, DR. FITIGU TADESSE (FIRST ASSISTANT, AFRICAN AFFAIRS) AND ACTING AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR ALEMAYEHU ABEBE.

5. GETACHEW KIBRET CHAIRS PLANS AND POLICY COMMITTEE AND MAY BE ELECTED MOFA'S REPRESENTATIVE ON CIVILIAN ADVISORY BODY NOW BEING PLANNED (CF ADDIS 11437), TESFAYE SAID.

6. OTHER MOFA SOURCES HAVE TOLD US THAT JUNIOR LEVELS IN FOREIGN OFFICE HAVE SENT PETITION TO AFCC DEMANDING REMOVAL OF FONMIN ZEWDE. GROUNDS CITED ARE REPORTEDLY ZEWDE'S INEFFECTIVENESS AS ADMINISTRATOR, PARTIALITY TOWARDS TIGRES AND CONNECTIONS WITH ANCIEN REGIME.

7. COMMENT: ZEWDE'S TIGRE ANTECEDENTS, RELATIVELY OPEN, FRANKLY MODERATE PRO-WESTERN POSTURE AND HIS CRITICAL EVALUATION OF AFCC FOREIGN POLICY THINKING MAKE HIM AN INVITING TARGET. IN CONTRAST TO ZEWDE, GETACHEW KIBRET IS AN AMHARA ARCHETYPE, CLEVER, DIFFICULT OF ACCESS, MANIPULATIVE, SUSPICIOUS AND AMBITIOUS. HE IS HAILU WOLDE GHIORGHIS' PATRON. ALEMAYEHU SEIFU LIKELY CHAFES AS SUBORDINATE OF FORMER MOFA DIRGEN ALEMAYEHU ABEBE WHO CLOSE TO FORMER FM DR. MINASSIE, ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIAL US-ETHIOPIA RELATIONSHIP AND INSERTED BETWEEN LONG-ABSENT CHIEF OF AMERICAN DIVISION HAMID AND HIMSELF (SEIFU).

8. TESFAYE WAS OUT ILL WHEN GETACHEW SELECTED AS HEAD PLANS AND POLICIES COMMITTEE AND LIKELY FEELS CHEATED. WE NEVERTHELESS INCLINED ACCEPT HIS DESCRIPTION OF SITUATION IN MOFA AND HIS BONA FIDES. WE TOO COUNT HIM, AS WELL AS FITIGU AND ALEMAYEHU, IN CORNER OF "ETHIOPIA FIRSTERS" INCREASINGLY CONCERNED BY THOSE WHO WOULD JEOPARDIZE ETHIO-US RELATIONSHIP, APPARENTLY FOR REASONS OF PERSONAL POLITICAL ADVANTAGE, KNOW-NOTHINGISM OR IDEOLOGICAL PRECONCEPTIONS.

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9. IN ORDER TO WIDEN UNDERSTANDING OF THE VALUE TO ETHIOPIA OF CURRENT US-ETHIOPIAN TIES WE ARE CURRENTLY PREPARING A SUMMARY OF THE TOTAL CURRENT US ASSISTANCE IN THE FIELDS OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, DROUGHT RELIEF, PEACE CORPS WORK, NAMRU RESEARCH AND THE EXCHANGE PROGRAM. WE WILL ENDEAVOR TO SEE THAT THIS MATERIAL REACHES THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST, INCLUDING THOSE LIKE TESFAYE MEKASHA WHO CAN USE IT TO SUPPORT VIEWS

THEY ALREADY HOLD. WE WILL ALSO ENDEAVOR TO FIND OCCASIONS
ON WHICH TO DISCUSS ETHIOPIA'S FOREIGN POLICY ALTERNATIVES
WITH GETACHEW KIBRET AND HIS COHORTS.
WYMAN

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